GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TRIBAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3321
ANSWERED ON:21.12.2004
OWNERSHIP RIGHTS TO MINOR FOREST PRODUCE
Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Common Minimum Programme of the Government vowed to give ownership right to Minor Forest produce (MFP) epecially Tendu leaves to tribals;

(b) if so, whether many States have changed track to give ownership right of minor forest produce except Tendu leaves;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Government has taken up the matter with the Ministry of Environment & Forests to convince States to grant ownership right to Tribals of Tendu leaves;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) the total loss likely to be suffered by the State Governments by granting ownership right of Tendu leaves to tribals; and

(g) the further steps taken or being taken by the Union Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH)

(a) The Common Minimum Programme (CMP) of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) announced on 27.5.2004 provides, inter alia, as under:

`The UPA will urge the states to make legislation for conferring ownership rights in respect of minor forest produce, including tendu patta, on all those people from the weaker sections who work in the forests`.

(b)to(e) The Ministry of Tribal Affairs have taken up the matter both with the Ministry of Environment & Forests and with the State Governments for conferring ownership rights in respect of Minor Forest Produce (MFP), including tendu patta, on tribals. The Ministry of Environment and Forests have also advised the State Governments to bring about a legislation conferring ownership rights in respect of MFP on people from weaker sections working in forests.

The people living in and around forests are already enjoying usufructory rights, mostly free of cost, in respect of collection of Minor Forest Produce (MFP)/Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP), for their domestic consumption. However they do not have clear cut ownership rights on MFP, which is a State subject. However States are in the process of devising different patterns of involving local communities in collection and trading of MFP, including sharing of revenue with local communities. In some States like Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh a share of net revenue collected from MFP goes back to the collectors of primary produce.

(f) & (g): This information is not available with the Central Government.